

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1-11 have been amended to merely clarify the recited subject matter and new claims 12-14 have been added to more fully claim the disclosed invention. Claims 1-14 are pending.

Additionally, Applicant has added an Abstract on a separate sheet of paper. However, Applicant submits that the specification already includes the necessary headings as required by the MPEP. Thus, Applicant submits that the objection to the specification for not including properly formatted headings is traversed.

Claims 4-7 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c) as being in improper multiply dependent format. Applicant directs the Office's attention to the contents of the Preliminary Amendment filed at the time of application filing (see item 25 on the Application Transmittal Form), removing any multiple dependencies from claims 4-7. Thus, the objection is traversed. Additionally, because claims 4-7 have not been rejected on their merits. No next Office Action may be made final.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for alleged indefiniteness. Applicant submits that the amended claims overcome the rejection.

Claims 1-3 and 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Salin et al. (U.S. 6,370,290). Applicant traverses the rejection because Salin does not qualify as prior art because its 102(e) and 371 dates are 1 December 1998, whereas the present application claims priority from 28 January 1998. A copy of the Certified Translation of the Priority Document has been submitted herewith to perfect priority. Thus, the rejection is traversed and claims 1-3 and 8-11 are allowable.

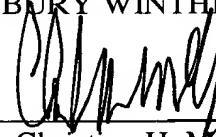
All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Attached hereto as an Appendix captioned "Version with markings to show changes made" is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment.

Respectfully submitted,

PILLSBURY WINTHROP LLP

By _____


Christine H. McCarthy

Reg. No. 41844

Tel. No.: (703) 905-2043

Fax No.: (703) 905-2500

CHM

1600 Tysons Boulevard
McLean, Virginia
U.S.A. 22102
(703) 905-2000